

November 28, 1865.

Dr. J. E. Gray, F.R.S., V.P. in the Chair.

Mr. P. L. Sclater called the attention of the Meeting to the additions made to the Society's Menagerie since the last Session. Amongst the more noticeable of these were

1. Two Pondicherry Vultures (*Vultur calvus*) and a Neophron (*Neophron percnopterus*) from Calcutta, purchased July 3rd. The acquisition of these specimens rendered the series of Vulturidæ in the Society's collection very complete, as it now embraced examples of not less than 14 species, namely,

Cathartes atratus.

— *aura.*

Sarcorhamphus gryphus.

Gyparchus papa.

Vultur monachus.

— *occipitalis.*

— *calvus.*

Vultur auricularis.

Gyps fulvus.

— *rueppellii.*

Neophron percnopterus.

— *occipitalis.*

Gypohierax angolensis.

Gypaëtus barbatus.

Mr. Sclater called attention to the differences noticeable between the two specimens of *Vultur auricularis* in the Society's collection. In the example acquired from Eastern Africa along with the Hippopotamus in 1850 (specimen *a* of the Catalogue of Vertebrata, ed. 3. p. 45), there was barely any appearance of ear-wattles, and the occiput was slightly feathered. In the larger specimen lately purchased, and believed to be from Natal, the ear-wattles were well developed, and the head and face were alike naked and red in colour. These differences had already been commented upon in Mr. Gurney's Catalogue of the Raptorial Birds in the Norwich Museum (p. 58).

Mr. Sclater also called attention to the two specimens of *Neophron percnopterus* in the Society's collection. In the smaller specimen, lately received from Calcutta, the whole bill and claws were white; in that acquired from the Cape Colony in 1863 (spec. 8 *a* of the Cat. of Vert. p. 45) the point of the bill and claws were black.

2. A male Chimpanzee (*Troglodytes niger*), purchased of a dealer in Liverpool on the 15th of August last, making up a pair of this animal, which, together with the female Orang (acquired in May 1864), were all living in good health in the new Monkey-house.

3. A pair of Dama Antelopes (*Antilope dama*, Licht.), purchased of the Zoological Gardens, Antwerp; new to the Society's collection, though probably specifically identical with the *Antilope mhorri*, Bennett.

4. A collection of birds from Djeddah, Arabia, presented to the Society by Henry H. Calvert, Esq., of H. M. Consular Service, on September 5th. The collection embraced 19 specimens of the following species:—*Pterocles lichtensteini*, Temm., *Caccabis heyi* (Temm.), and *Æna capensis* (Linn.). The two former of these species had not been previously exhibited in the Society's collection.

5. A young female African Elephant (*Elephas africanus*), making a pair of these animals now in the Menagerie. Two examples of this Elephant had come into the London market for sale, having been remitted here from Vienna, where they had been brought from the Soudan, along with other animals, by the well-known traveller Casanova. The best of these two had been purchased for the Society's collection for the sum of £500. It was a female, now standing about 3 feet 6 inches high, and measuring 6 feet 3 inches in girth round the middle of the body. The male of the same species (acquired in June last) measured 5 feet 6 inches in height, and 9 feet 6 inches in girth.

6. An Abyssinian Hornbill (*Bucorax abyssinicus*), purchased along with the African Elephant. Specimens of this fine bird, on two former occasions, had reached the Society's Gardens alive; but in each case in bad condition, and only to die shortly afterwards. The present example was in excellent health, and made the fifth species of this peculiar family of birds now exhibited in the Society's Aviaries, the series being composed as follows:—

Buceros cavatus.
 — *rhinoceros*.
 — *albirostris*.

Toccos erythrorhynchus.
Bucorax abyssinicus.

7. A Tree-Kangaroo (*Dendrolagus inustus*, Müll.) from New Guinea, received in exchange from the Zoological Gardens, Rotterdam.

8. A Black-necked Screamer (*Chauna nigricollis*, Sclater), received November 16th, having been purchased in New Granada for the Society by Mr. Edward Greey, Corr. Memb., to whom the Society had likewise been indebted for their original specimens of this bird. Mr. Sclater stated that since he had described the species, he had noticed another fine example of it in the Museum at Bremen. He was also of opinion that the *Chauna derbiana* of the Leyden Museum (if the locality assigned to it, New Granada, were correct) would probably turn out to belong to this species.

9. A young female Jew-Monkey (*Pithecia satanas*) (also acquired through Mr. Greey), exhibited the well-marked dorsal patch and other peculiarities of the adult, and had induced Mr. Sclater to believe that he had been in error in referring the specimen figured in the Society's Proceedings for 1864 (pl. xli. p. 712) to the same species.

Mr. Sclater promised a further communication on these two *Pitheciæ* as soon as he had made the necessary investigations into their somewhat confused synonymy.

Mr. P. L. Sclater made some remarks on the animals he had noticed in several of the continental zoological gardens which he had visited during the summer.

The Gardens of the Zoological Society of Hamburg, established only about two years since, were stated to be in a very flourishing state, and to contain several very noticeable varieties. Among them

might be mentioned a fine Indian Tapir (*Tapirus indicus*), a pair of scarce American Deer (*Cervus gymnotis*) received from Venezuela, examples of two rare *Spizaëti* (*S. isidori*, Des Murs, from Bogota, and *S. bellicosus* (Vieill.) from Zanzibar), and a fine specimen of the rare Guinea-fowl (*Numida vulturina*, Hardw.) from the eastern coast of Africa (about 4° S. lat.), received likewise from Zanzibar.

At Rotterdam the Zoological Gardens, under the care of Mr. P. H. Martin, were stated to contain a pair of the rare Bovine animal of Celebes, *Bubalus depressicornis* (*Antilope depressicornis*, Temm.).

At Amsterdam Mr. Sclater had had the pleasure of inspecting a fine young male Hippopotamus, born in the Gardens of the Royal Zoological Society "Natura artis Magistra" on the 9th of July last. Under the special care of the excellent director, Mr. G. F. Westerman, this little animal (of which several photographic portraits were exhibited) was stated to be rapidly increasing in size and strength. Although several previous instances of the birth of a Hippopotamus in captivity had occurred, both in Antwerp and Paris, this was the first instance of one having been successfully reared.

The following abstract of a letter of Capt. J. M. Dow, C.M.Z.S., addressed to Dr. Albert Günther, was read:—

"New York, Oct. 30, 1865.

"You will be gratified to see amongst the collection two fine examples of *Thalassophryne* which I obtained at Panama. One of the specimens was picked up on the sand beach of one of the small islands in Panama Bay, on which our American seamen have their dépôts; the second example I purchased in the native fish-market in the City of Panama. I took advantage of the occasion of the purchase of the fish to inquire of the native fishermen as to the effect produced in a human subject on being wounded by one of the spines of *Thalassophryne*. The natives seemed quite familiar with the existence of the spines, and of the emission from them of a poison which, when introduced into a wound, caused fever, an effect somewhat similar to that produced by the sting of a Scorpion; but in no case was a wound caused by one of them known to result seriously.

"I had no opportunity, myself, to try the effect of the poison on another fish or small animal. The slightest pressure of the finger at the base of the spine caused the poison to jet a foot or more from the opening of the spine."

The following extracts were read from letters received from Mr. R. Swinhoe, F.Z.S., H.M. Consul for Formosa:—

"Takow, Formosa, May 18, 1865.

"I have lately been very energetic on the Society's behalf, and have forwarded two Deer for shipment home. They are two females of the *Cervus taëvanus*. I have also on hand eleven Swinhoe's Pheasants (*Euplocamus swinhoii*), which I am preparing to ship away. They are cocks and hens, in nearly equal numbers. The cocks are

magnificent birds, and I am sanguine about getting them home. As soon as they are shipped I will advise you, and enclose you the captain's receipt, so that you will be able to cover the risk. Most of the Pheasants come here from a distance of 200 miles, from the mountain-range near Tamsuy. I have spared no labour in getting them; and as they appear pretty hardy birds, there is no reason why they should not reach home. I am also trying to get a couple of females of *Cervus swinhoii*, and live specimens of the *Capricornis*, the Bear, and the Leopard."

"Takow, July 25, 1865.

"From some Chinese notes which I have lately been reading on the Zoology of Formosa, I learn of the existence here of some animals to me hitherto unknown,—among others a Porcupine and a wild *Bos* which occurs in herds of hundreds and thousands. I think in this last I shall discover the wild stock of the small Yellow Cow of South China. I shall spare no pains, you may be sure, to investigate this interesting fact."

"Takow, Formosa, 8th August, 1865.

"Chinese books tell of a Porcupine that occurs in this island. I have not yet seen it, but I suspect it will be the same as that found throughout India and in South China. In Mammals all that I have lately secured are several specimens of the pretty *Kerivoula* Bat, and a nearly unicolor variety of the Red-bellied Squirrel, *Sciurus erythræus*, from the southern mountains. In birds I have lately got several examples of the Green Dove (male and female), my *Sphenocercus formosæ*, and a skin of the *Pitta oreas*. The latter I got before from the northern mountains; my latest acquisition shows the species to extend also to the south."

The following papers were read:—

1. A REVISION OF THE SPECIES OF GOLDEN MOLES (CHRYSOCHLORIS). BY DR. JOHN EDW. GRAY, F.R.S., V.P.Z.S.

Several species of Golden Moles have been described by various zoologists on specimens procured from different parts of Africa—the size and form of the muffle, the size and form of the claws, and slight differences in the colour of the fur being regarded as sufficient to separate the species. I have examined the large series of specimens which is contained in the British Museum, received from various parts of Africa, and I find that the form of the muffle greatly depends on the art, or amount of care on the part of the persons who skinned and stuffed the specimens, and that its form can be altered at pleasure. The form of the claws of the front feet seems to vary according to the age, and probably also according to the sex of the specimens; but unfortunately the sex is seldom marked on the specimens in Museums.

The general colour and, especially, the distinctness of the white and dark marks on the head seem to vary greatly in specimens from the same locality. Moreover this animal is often put into spirits on